

# WIDESPREAD INTEREST SHOWN IN SUN'S HOME COMPETITION

Architects and Laymen Commend It—Prospective Contestants Seek Details—Size of Building Depends on Cost of Materials Specified

Judging by responses received during the last week to THE SUN'S invitation to draughtsmen to take part in a country home planning competition, the contest is to be one of the most interesting ever held in this part of the country. Not only have prospective competitors shown their interest by writing for information concerning minor details, but THE SUN has received numerous letters from architects in high standing commending the contest as one which will result not only to the great credit of individual prize winners but to the good of the whole community.

Many of the writers say that the choice of a plan for a house that can be erected for not more than \$4,500, as the basis of the competition, is an excellent one, for while many of the men who will take part in the competition have helped design more pretentious dwellings, so few have ever turned their faculties to less costly buildings that many novel and attractive ideas may be expected.

Universal approval is expressed for the jury of leading architects—Burt L. Penner, John Russell Pope and Breck Trowbridge—who have kindly consented to pass judgment on the work submitted by contestants. So high is the regard expressed for these men and for their ability that THE SUN feels unusually fortunate in obtaining their cooperation. The mere fact that they form the jury makes certain the selection of the most worthy designs as prize winners.

That the public is keenly interested in the competition is indicated by numerous letters from SUN readers in many parts of the country. Many of these communications tell of searches far and wide for really attractive, well planned homes of moderate cost. The writers express the thought that architects who have a solution for the moderate priced home problem need not worry about the future, for their field is practically the entire country. Several interesting letters have been received from land developers, one of whom says that the greatest difficulty encountered in his business is to obtain plans and designs for low cost houses that will appeal to modern tastes.

"Our people," he writes, "have been so fed up on high class architecture that though they are able to spend say \$7,000 on their homes they demand as much of the artistic as the man who can afford to pay much more. That is as it should be. I do not believe that attractiveness and comfort should be reserved for those alone who can pay high prices for them. It is the right of every man who spends his money on a home to demand an economically, artistically planned, durable building."

"If we had more men who could plan attractive, low priced houses we would have more home owners. Many people will not buy to-day because they cannot find satisfactory houses for prices they are willing to pay. These people do not want everything for nothing, but they do demand well planned houses."

During the last week THE SUN has been bombarded with questions concerning minor details of the competition. Many inquiries deal with the same matters, usually questions of detail, which the programme leaves to the discretion of the individual contestant. Most numerous queries are about kind and size of paper to be used. There is no ruling in this matter. It is recalled, however, that in the last SUN competition most of the contestants mounted their drawings—perspective, floor plans, elevations—on a single sheet of fairly heavy cardboard. Such drawings were more easily handled and could be studied with more facility than when spread over several sheets.

One prospective contestant has asked if a colored perspective is admissible. The answer is, decidedly no. This is not to be a contest of pretty pictures, though the manner of presenting the plans and perspective undoubtedly will have great weight with the jury. This is a serious attempt to solve a practical problem and the jury is to be asked to award the prizes offered to those men or women not necessarily whose pictures may be prettiest or whose pen work is most agreeable to look at, but to those drawings which combine practicability and attractiveness to the greatest degree.

In THE SUN's last competition the jury paused in admiration before the pen work of several contestants, almost marvelling at the skill shown in several instances; but their selections did not include the best examples of pen and ink art, though the artists who took the prizes did show remarkable talent in this branch of their work.

Many contestants seek information on the limits of material to be specified. That is a matter for individual choice, the selection being limited only by the outside cost of the building. Whatever material or materials are suggested, they must be such as can be used in a house of the size planned for an amount not to exceed \$4,500.

In fixing on a house with maximum contents of 28,000 cubic feet THE SUN does not mean to indicate that every plan submitted must be for a dwelling of that size. Cost of material will largely determine the size, and where more expensive materials are specified cubic contents will be correspondingly smaller. At the present time 16 cents a cubic foot is considered about the minimum cost in fairly good suburban house construction of the most inexpensive sort. On that basis a house of 28,000 cubic feet would cost almost an even \$4,500.

That means a dwelling of liberal proportions, if anything a little larger than the average small suburban home. That being the case, leeway is given for the use of some more costly forms of construction, but in every case the cubic feet cost increases the cubic contents of the house must be cut proportionately.

THE SUN has been asked if all the designs submitted in the competition are to be published. They are not; in the first place because to print all designs properly designed, with descriptions and specifications, would be almost a mechanical impossibility. It is intended, however, to publish perhaps five or more of the designs which the jury deem to have some special merit.

## PROTECTING THE WEST SIDE.

Zoning to Root Out Garages and Trade From Residential Streets. Tentative plans of the districting commission for the upper West Side look to the maintenance as a high class residential center. Walter Stabler, controller of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, chairman of the sub-committee, has worked out the tentative districting plan for Manhattan, says: "One of the blights that has helped to ruin the quiet and attractiveness of certain of the residential streets on the upper

West Side between Seventy-second and Manhattan streets has been the invasion of garages. The erection of a garage in the middle of a residential block has destroyed the property values on many streets. The proposed districting scheme puts a stop to this.

"Everything possible has been done to check the further incursion of business on residential streets. Streets that are only slightly 'spotted' by business it is hoped to 'bring back' by restricting them exclusively to residential use. The streets on either side of Broadway between West End Avenue and Amsterdam Avenue have been especially hurt by an occasional business being 'planted' in residential sections. In most instances the future use of these streets has been reserved for residential purposes. By prohibiting the erection of any additional business or factory buildings in these blocks it is thought that the districting scheme may offer substantial encouragement to the erection of apartment houses, and thus tend to restore the original character of the street. Many owners have hesitated to improve their properties with residential buildings for fear the desira-

bility of the neighborhood for residential purposes would be ruined through the invasion of garages and stores."

Property owners in blocks that have been invaded by garages generally experience difficulty in securing loans from the large lending institutions. Life insurance companies and savings banks refuse to lend on such properties as the incursion of further business might so destroy the value of their security as to wipe out part of their equity. If blocks now only slightly spotted by business are insured against further invasion it is thought that the large lending institutions will be more willing to make loans on such property. Only those side streets that have been so "spotted" as to be beyond reclamation for residential purposes have been indicated as business streets. It is hoped that garages will tend in the future to segregate on these streets.

Every attempt has been made to preserve the attractiveness of the areas adjacent to the parks as residential districts. Riverside Park is chiefly surrounded by residential streets. So is Morningside Park, except where it comes in contact with 110th street and

with Amsterdam Avenue. Manhattan Square is bounded by but one business street, Columbus Avenue; its other three boundary streets are all residential streets. Central Park is not wholly within this district, but in so far as it is it is completely bounded by residential streets.

Noisances and industry are strictly prohibited throughout the entire area. Wherever feasible not only the side streets but also the avenues have been preserved exclusively for residential use. Central Park West, West End Avenue, Riverside Drive, Morningside Drive, Morningside Avenue, Claremont Avenue, Manhattan Avenue between 106th and 108th and Manhattan Avenue between 110th and 124th are all indicated as residential streets. On the north and south streets it is proposed to confine all business to Broadway, Amsterdam Avenue, Columbus Avenue, Manhattan Avenue between 104th and 110th and Eighth Avenue. The only side streets on which business will be allowed are between Riverside Drive and Broadway, on Ninety-sixth street; between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue, on Seventy-third, Seventy-sixth, Eighty-first, Eighty-second, Eighty-fourth, Ninety-fifth, Ninety-sixth, 104th, 125th and 126th streets; between Amsterdam and Columbus, on Eighty-third, Eighty-ninth, Ninety-sixth, Ninety-ninth, 101st and 102nd streets; between Columbus and Central Park West, on 100th, 109th and 110th streets; between Manhattan and Eighth Avenue, 116th to 122d streets.

## THE SUN'S COUNTRY HOME COMPETITION

**\$500 in Four Prizes Offered to Draughtsmen for Plans of House to Cost Not More Than \$4,500**

### DRAUGHTSMEN:

THE SUN invites you to take part in a competition for floor plans and perspective for a country house which can be built at a cost of not more than \$4,500. All designs submitted will be judged by a competent jury of professional men, and for the four designs selected by them as having the best qualities, judged from the terms of the competition, THE SUN will award prizes as follows:

|             |         |              |         |
|-------------|---------|--------------|---------|
| First Prize | - \$250 | Second Prize | - \$150 |
| Third       | - 50    | Fourth       | - 50    |

This competition is intended to provide a means for young draughtsmen to express their ideas regarding modern country home planning. It is the hope of THE SUN that through the expression of such ideas, gained from a study of present day requirements, a type of modern country home may be evolved which will answer the demand for a combination of attractiveness, comfort, stability and efficiency, all at reasonable cost.

No designs will be accepted from practising architects. In other words, this competition is limited to men and women employed as draughtsmen and draughtswomen in architects' offices. It is further limited to employees of firms whose offices are within the boundaries of Greater New York, Long Island, Westchester county, N. Y.; Hudson, Bergen, Morris, Essex, Passaic, Union, Middlesex and Monmouth counties, N. J., and Fairfield county, Conn., and the students of all architectural schools within these boundaries; students of the Society of Beaux Arts, New York city, and of the architectural schools of Columbia College, University of Pennsylvania, Harvard and Cornell universities and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

### Terms of the competition are:

**FIRST**—The design must be for a two story and cellar all the year house. An attic may be included if desired. The building must be one that can be erected, exclusive of cost of land, in the suburban district of New York, for a cost not to exceed \$4,500. It is assumed to have not more than 28,000 cubic feet of contents from the cellar floor. Included in the cost must be all charges for a complete building except for lighting fixtures and decorations. Plumbing fixtures, heating plant and wiring for lighting must be included.

**SECOND**—For the purposes of this competition the plot on which this house is to be erected is assumed to be level and of an area 100x100 feet. It is assumed that the ground is free of rock and can be excavated at the usual cost for such work.

**THIRD**—No limit is placed on the area of the structure and the materials to be used in construction except those of cost and size of plot.

**FOURTH**—It is assumed that the house designed will be for the use of three adults, two children and one servant.

**FIFTH**—All drawings shall be rendered in pen and ink and shall consist of a plot plan drawn to a scale 1-16 of an inch to a foot; a perspective of the front of the house drawn to a scale 1-4 of an inch to a foot on the nearest corner and plans of both floors drawn to a scale 1-8 of an inch to a foot. All drawings must be mounted on cardboard.

**SIXTH**—The plot plan must indicate the position of the house on the plot. For this purpose it is assumed that there are three adjoining plots each 100x100 in size, any two of which are assumed to be built on already. The competitive plan must show the proposed improvement of the third plot and its relation to the other two. This block plan must show approaches, paths, garage and garden details of one of them. Floor plans and perspective are to be of sufficient detail that finished plans can be made from them.

**SEVENTH**—All plans are to remain the property of the various contestants, but THE SUN reserves the right to publish any or all of them without further compensation than has been stated above. Plans are to be returned to competitors as soon after the close of the competition as practicable. THE SUN will take reasonable care of all drawings, but will not be responsible for any drawings lost or damaged.

**EIGHTH**—This competition is to be closed at midnight, March 26. All competitive drawings must by that time be received at the office of THE SUN, 150 Nassau street, New York city.

**NINTH**—All designs are to be signed by a character selected by each competitor. Accompanying all drawings must be sealed envelopes containing full name and character mark of each competitor; name and address of office in which he or she is employed or the school at which the competitor is studying, and the following form signed by the full name of the competitor:

I (we) affirm that the design and plan submitted by me (us) in this, The Sun's Country Home Competition, are of my (our) own original conception, and have not been adapted or copied from any other design or plan.

Signature.....

**TENTH**—Each competitor must submit with his drawings a description of his building, materials, &c., the description to be limited to not more than 500 words.

Judges of this competition will be asked to base their awards on the fitness of the design to the material employed, the adaptability of the design, the excellence of the plan and the possibility of production within the allowed amount.

## Jamaica Bay Harbor Improvement

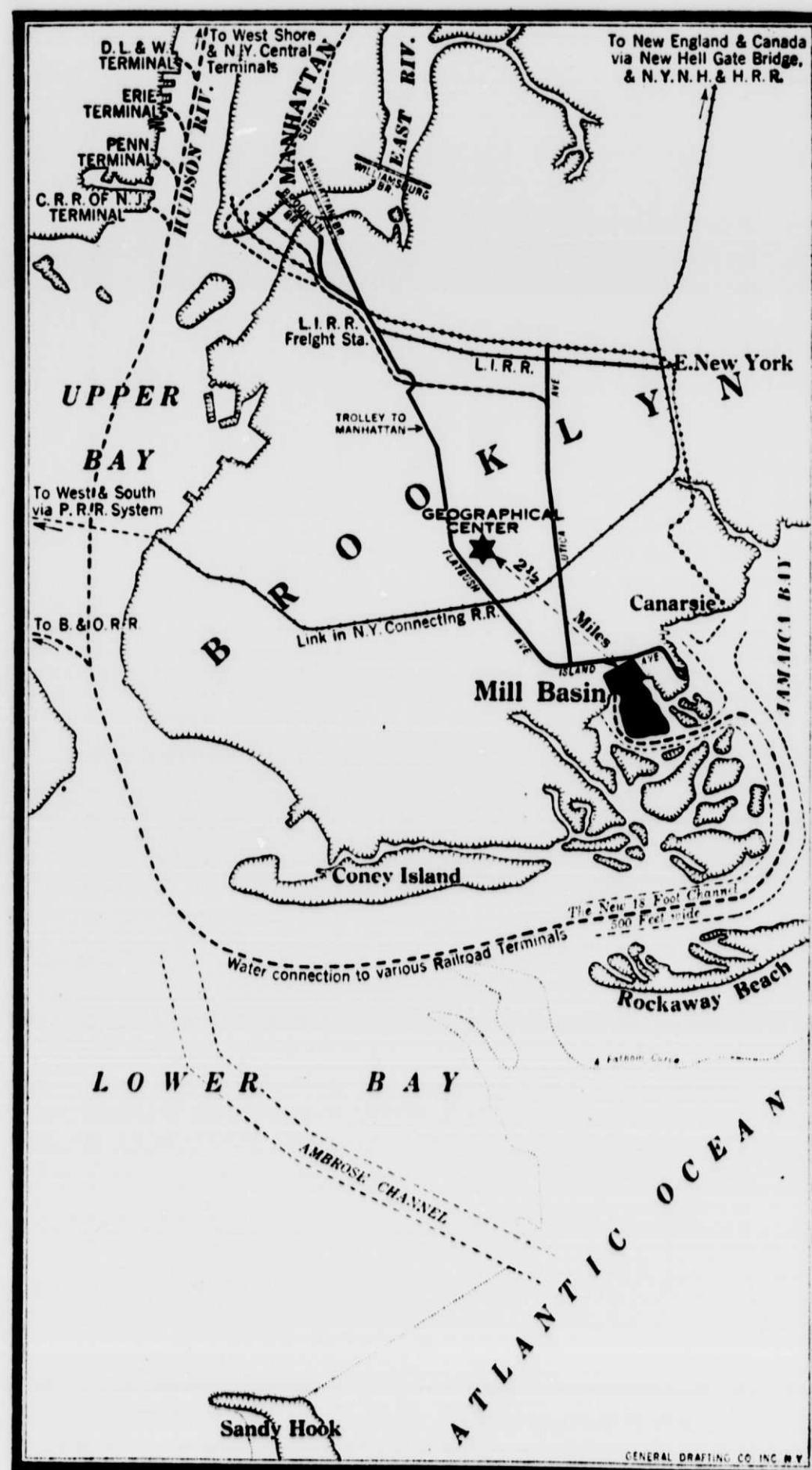
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